

# PHONES HELD UP BY STRIKE THREAT

## Installation at Parkchester Development Halted in Jurisdictional Row

### 71 ARE AWAITING SERVICE

## Electricians Would Bar Phone Workers Till Huge Project Is Completed Next Year

Bowing to a strike threat made by Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has caused the New York Telephone Company to stop installing telephones in its \$50,000,000 Parkchester housing development in the Bronx pending settlement of a labor dispute, it was learned yesterday.

The union, which was indicted Thursday with five contractors' associations for conspiracy to violate the anti-trust laws, took the position that no telephone wiring men should work on any part of the vast project while a single building trades worker was employed on the grounds.

This means that telephone employees must yield the work to members of Local 3; that telephone men may not wire a completed building on the project, even though the nearest building trades men are employed several blocks away.

The telephone men, who are members of the United Telephone Organizations, an independent group, were equally insistent on their claim to jurisdiction. They held that they should be permitted to wire any apartment in a building evacuated as complete by the building group.

### Few Would Be Installed

If the deadlock should continue few new telephones would be installed in the fifty-one buildings of Parkchester for at least a year.

Five buildings of the development have been completed and 800 families have moved in. Of this number, 199 have received telephones. Seventy-one other families have ordered telephones, but in the present situation only a small number whose apartments already have "subscriber wires" may get service. It was explained by the telephone company that these wires were put in by members of Local 3 under a "contract labor" arrangement.

Henry Mayer, counsel for the United Telephone Organizations, asserted that only fifty or sixty telephone workers were involved in a dispute that might halt the installation of hundreds of telephones. The five completed buildings have a potential capacity of about 1,000 instruments.

Yesterday the telephone company backed up its workers, a group of whom threatened to strike last month because they felt, as one grievance, that Local 3 was encroaching on their jobs by means of contract labor granted to it by the company.

### Company's Statement

In a statement the company said: "The delay in furnishing telephone service in the Parkchester Development is occasioned by the request of the owner (Metropolitan Life) that, for the time being, telephone company employees not be employed to do telephone wiring work in the buildings which have been completed.

"This request was made necessary by the threat of Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to strike if telephone company workers were employed to do this work. A strike by the electrical workers would tie up many building operations on building units still under construction.

"The company has, for many years, had certain telephone wiring work in buildings under construction or alteration done by contractors employing members of Local 3 during the time mechanics affiliated with the building trades are still working on the building. When the construction of a building is completed and building trades mechanics are no longer on the job, all telephone wiring in these buildings is done by telephone company employees.

"Since the buildings in which telephone service is being held up are completed and no building trades mechanics are employed thereon, under the prevailing practices wiring work in these buildings is clearly telephone employees' work."

A spokesman for the union took the view that there was no labor dispute. He said it had been recognized for eight or ten years that Local 3 had jurisdiction in a situation like that at Parkchester.

### ARNOLD SUITS DEFENDED

## Berge Says Workers Approve— Van Arsdale Denies Charges

"time" its cases with respect to private investigations.

Saying that the government had notified labor unions of the practices regarded as unreasonable restraints of trade under the Sherman act, Mr. Berge listed them as follows:

"Unreasonable restraints designed: to prevent the use of cheaper materials, improved equipment, or more efficient methods; to compel the hiring of useless and unnecessary labor; to enforce systems of graft and extortion; to enforce illegally fixed prices; to destroy an established and legitimate system of collective bargaining."

Five hundred persons attended the meeting. They showed themselves overwhelmingly in favor of Mr. Van Arsdale, giving him prolonged cheers and applause. Mr. Berge's speech was received with boos mingled with applause.

Henry Kaiser, attorney for the A. F. of L., attacked Thurman Arnold, assistant attorney general in charge of the anti-trust cases, as threatening "to undermine the hard-won status of organized labor."